

Getting to Yes!

The engaged P.E.O.

Statements in italics indicate the facilitator's speaking parts

I. **Slide 1 Introduction: (2 minutes)**

Thank you so much for joining today to talk about why and how we say yes to P.E.O.

Slide 2 *Today we are going to:*

- *Learn to talk about P.E.O.*
- *Recognize the lifecycle of a chapter*
- *Identify attributes of an ideal P.E.O.*
- *Personally commit to helping our chapter grow*

II. **Why? (2 minutes)**

Turn to a partner and introduce yourself if necessary. Tell them why you said yes to P.E.O. Consider who invited you, when, why you accepted the invitation, and why you're still here.

III. **Mission Statement and Elevator Speech (10 minutes)**

- *On the count of three – all together – please recite the Pledge of Allegiance. (Stop them after a few lines.)*
- *On the count of three – all together – please say out loud your top three personal values. The things you hold dear. (It is likely a bit harder.)*
- *On the count of three – all together – please recite the P.E.O. Mission Statement. (Probably impossible for most.)*

Mission Statements are important. They're the values of the organization. We don't have to be able to repeat P.E.O.'s mission statement to every woman we meet, but we need to know what core values are in our mission statement and we need to be able to communicate those clearly to others.

(If not using the PowerPoint presentation, have the P.E.O. Mission Statement written on a flip-chart or handout for members to refer).

Slide 3

- *Looking at the P.E.O. Mission statement, write down three words that exemplify your own personal values. **P.E.O. is a philanthropic organization where women celebrate the advancement of women; educate women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans and stewardship of Cottey College; and motivate women to achieve their highest aspirations.***
- *Now, look at the mission statement again and jot down three words that are exemplified by our chapter.*

We have a better idea of the mission statement of P.E.O. and can begin to connect it with our own personal values and the collective values of our chapter. But it's not just us, is it? Growing P.E.O. is the only way we can ensure the great works we do and the values we all hold dear continue long into the future. Until someone knows what kind of organization they have joined or might join,

P.E.O. won't be a meaningful part of their life. And until we can convey what P.E.O. is and what this organization means to us, we'll have a harder time growing our sisterhood.

Talking to one another about P.E.O. is pretty easy. It's talking to others about P.E.O. and trying to convey the importance of our mission to non-members that can be hard. Saying "well, it's just, I don't know. Amazing. It's hard to explain" isn't going to cut it.

Take a look at the six words you wrote down previously and take a minute or two to write a couple of sentences and then share with your partner. Role play it, ask "why is P.E.O. important to you?" or "What is P.E.O.?" and share your elevator speech with one another. Here's a sample you can use:

Slide 4 P.E.O. provides educational opportunities for women. We do this by offering scholarships, grants, awards and loans to help women enhance their lives through learning.

IV. Slide 5 What does an ideal member look like? (10 minutes)

When we don't have a clear idea of who we are as an organization or as a chapter, we have a hard time getting people to join and if they do join, we sometimes have a hard time getting people to stay.

Three reasons people typically leave an organization:

- 1. They don't feel connected to the mission. The connection was never there or their priorities have changed and it's not worth it to them to participate any further.*
- 2. Their experience is different than what they were told to expect. Perhaps they were told we're an incredible organization that supports women in education but their only experience is a monthly business meeting with an occasional potluck and no real emphasis on the projects we support. Or perhaps they thought they were joining a basic social group with no real expectations of holding a leadership position. Imagine their shock when the nominating committee comes calling!*
- 3. They don't feel an emotional or personal connection to the group. They don't feel like they'll be missed if they don't participate.*

Now that we all know what kind of an organization we actually joined and are prepared to talk about it, let's talk about getting others to join in the fun. With your partner, list the attributes of an ideal member. (If time, pairs can share some of their top attributes)

The ideal attributes of a member should align with the information conveyed in your Preacceptance and Postinitiation counseling sessions. There really is nothing more important than those. If you clearly convey what someone is getting themselves into before they sign on the dotted line, they're much more likely to remain an active member of your chapter.

V. Slide 6 The Lifecycle of a Chapter (5 minutes)

The story of Chapter PDQ. Chapter PDQ had ever-increasing membership numbers and focused on projects and fundraising. Things were going along great but then some of the older chapter members began passing away and the bond of the chapter wore thin and the current members didn't know one another as well. Members stopped attending as regularly and membership numbers began to dwindle with no new initiates in the last three years. Officers were getting worn out and feeling spread too thin. Their first action was to get to know one another. Simple things like member surveys and getting to know you games. They held more socials and actually

enjoyed one another's company. As they got to know one another, they began planning activities that played to the strengths of the individual members. They talked about their simple yet exciting programs shared by sisters to friends and neighbors, who eventually became curious. There were natural opportunities to invite them to guest days, socials, and programs. They of course conducted preacceptance counseling and extended invitations. With newer members joining the chapter and their interest in taking an active role, fundraising and attention on our projects began to increase. The lifecycle of a chapter is like any relationship that requires care and attention. All the while, the chapter reinforced the purpose of the organization and made it clear the expectations that were placed on every member.

Brainstorm with a partner where you think your chapter is in its lifecycle.

VI. Slide 7 Round of applause (2 minutes)

*The most important part of any relationship is gratitude. Be sure to recognize one another regularly and know how you each will feel appreciated. Keep in mind that some don't like the idea of public recognition and others thrive on it. **Slide 8** Whether it's a personal note, a sincere word of thanks in private, or a chapter announcement, recognizing others and saying thank you is vital. None of us do the work we do for P.E.O. for the recognition. But it sure is nice to be recognized sometimes!*

VII. Slide 9 Suggestions (2 minutes)

- Survey members – see how they think things are going and what changes they'd like to see
- Offer childcare
- Plan more socials and family-friendly events
- Ask non-participating members to present a program
- Wear nametags – it helps new members or those who have been gone for a while to not feel uncomfortable when it's difficult to put a name with a face.
- Make sure business meetings are efficient and start/end on time. Well-prepared officers and efficient meetings that end at the same time each month will help all members feel like their time is not being wasted.
- Recognize members for works big and small.

VIII. Closing (2 minutes)

Slide 10 *Please turn to your partner and share ONE goal that you have for your chapter's growth and TWO ideas you are committed to implementing in your chapter. And then pinky swear 😊*

Slide 11 *(If time, volunteers may share their goals and commitments. Consider following up at future meetings with updates on goal progress.)* **Slide 12** *Remember, a goal without a plan is just a wish!*

Slide 13 *Thank you so much for coming today and your participation!*